

## Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*)

**CAUTION**

### Description

Grows up to 6 meters or more. Aside from its immense size, giant hogweed is also distinguished by its stout, dark reddish stem that can grow 5 cm to 10 cm in diameter. Leaf stalks are spotted and produce a compound leaf that can expand to 1.5 meters across. Each leaflet is deeply grooved or divided. Both stems and stalks are hollow and produce coarse hairs around a blister like pustule. Each year tuberous root-stalks form long-lived buds. In summer small, white flowers form together to make up an inflorescence or umbrella-shaped head that can attain a diameter of almost 1 meter. Warning: Its watery, clear sap contains photosensitizing compounds (furanocoumarins), which, when in contact with human skin and in combination with UV radiation, can cause burning.

### Key Identifiers

- ✓ Up to 6 m in height
- ✓ Leaves up to 1.5 m across
- ✓ Flower head up to 1 m across
- ✓ Reddish-purple blotches and stiff hairs on stem

### Location in Canada

Prevalent populations in British Columbia and Ontario. With smaller populations in Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. All reports in Alberta have proven to be inaccurate.

### Resources

[http://www.cbif.gc.ca/pls/pp/ppack.info?p\\_psn=195&p\\_type=all&p\\_sci=sci](http://www.cbif.gc.ca/pls/pp/ppack.info?p_psn=195&p_type=all&p_sci=sci)

<http://www.ontarioweeds.com/weed.php?w=HERMZ>

[http://www.weedinfo.ca/media/pdf/page\\_biology\\_canada\\_weeds.pdf](http://www.weedinfo.ca/media/pdf/page_biology_canada_weeds.pdf)

### Similar species

Giant hogweed has been mistaken for other species, especially other members of the carrot family. These species include; Cow Parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*), Wild carrot (*Daucus carota*), Goutweed (*Aegopodium podagraria*), poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), water-parsnip (*Sium suave*), spotted water-hemlock (*Cicuta maculata*) and angelica (*Angelica atropurpurea*). Its "giant" size is the easiest distinguishing feature, as it towers above these other species.

